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FOR

THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER

BY

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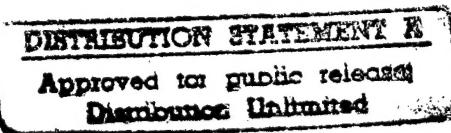
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ABSTRACT

TITLE: Midcourse Corrections for the National Security Adviser

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The National Security Adviser should be institutionalized by Congress, and given guidance on the roles and functions he should play in the national security decision making process. There is no basis for the Adviser's position in the National Security Act, which codified the National Security Council (NSC). What's more, the original framers of the NSC had intended the NSC, not a "Presidential Assistant" to be the President's primary advisory body on the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to national security. When President Eisenhower appointed Gordon Gray as his special assistant, he established a position that would eventually compete with, then overshadow the advice of NSC principals. The National Security Adviser has three major roles to play in the national security decision making process: "honest broker" custodian-manager of the policy making process, and vicar of strategy. These are important roles he must play.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel James C. Pearson is a 1977 graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he received his commission through Air Force ROTC. After graduating from navigator training, he was assigned to the 68th Bombardment Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina. In 1981, he attended pilot training, and was assigned to the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, UK in 1983. Subsequent assignments included Strike Operations Staff Officer and Flight Safety Officer at Headquarters USAFE, and Crisis Action Team Chief & Air Desk Officer at US Central Command. Lt Col Pearson is a distinguished graduate of Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College, and a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1995.

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Introduction

He should be a nonpolitical confidant of the president, a trusted member of the president's immediate official family but should not be identified with the immediate staff of personal advisers. He must be objective and willing to subordinate his personal views on policy to his task of coordinating the views of all responsible officials. [He] is only a servant of the president and the other members of the Council. Indeed his job is not to sell the president an idea with which he is in sympathy, but rather to insure that the views of all interested departments and agencies are reflected. Equally important, he must be willing to forego publicity and personal aggrandizement.

Admiral Sidney W. Souers
First Executive Secretary to the National Security Council. (32:34)

When Admiral Souers penned these words, he was providing President Truman a job description for the position Souers was about to leave--the Executive Secretary and statutory head of the National Security Council (NSC) Staff. That was November, 1954. In the last three decades, nineteen men have attempted to fill that job description--not as the Executive Secretary, but as the National Security Adviser.¹ Today, few would know who the current Executive Secretary is. A few more might know that the current National Security Adviser is Anthony Lake. What happened to the Executive Secretary? Where did the National Security Adviser come from? What does he do? More importantly, what should he be doing? If you find it difficult answering these questions, you're not alone. Here's what former National Security Council (NSC) senior staffer William Watts had to say about the whole NSC concept:

[The NSC] is a body and a process about which much too little is known, even by Members of Congress. At a time when the complexities of foreign affairs, and the interrelationships of foreign and domestic policy, are increasing virtually day by

¹ For clarity, I will use the term "National Security Adviser" throughout this paper. Since its inception with the Eisenhower Administration, this position has been referred to by many names, including Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, Special Assistant, Assistant for National Security Affairs, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. It was President Nixon who coined the term "National Security Adviser."

day, this lack of understanding serves nobody well--neither Congress, nor the executive branch, nor most importantly, the American people. (41:1)

At the heart of the NSC process is the National Security Adviser, and much of the uncertainty that Mr. Watts speaks of is due to the ambiguous relationship between the National Security Adviser and the NSC. *Therefore, I believe the position of the National Security Adviser should be institutionalized by Congress, and given guidance on the roles and functions the Adviser should play in the national security decision making process.* In this thesis, I will first show why the current relationship between the National Security Adviser and the NSC needs to be formally defined. Then, I will discuss the three primary roles the National Security Adviser must play: "honest broker," custodian-manager of the policymaking process, and chief strategist. Granted, these are not the only roles, but they are the most important ones. Finally, I will discuss what actions must occur to clarify and strengthen the relationship between the National Security Adviser and the NSC organization as a whole. Throughout this analysis, I will use three benchmarks as a means to justify my position. The primary benchmark is the National Security Act of 1947. In this Act, Congress established the NSC, the NSC staff, and the Executive Secretary. Second, the NSC, as codified by the National Security Act of 1947, represented a considerable compromise. Therefore, I will refer back to what the original framers of the NSC concept had in mind in their original proposals. Clearly, Navy Secretary James Forrestal and his close adviser, Ferdinand Eberstadt, envisioned an NSC concept quite differently than what was eventually enacted. Finally, the third benchmark is the evolution of the National Security Adviser's role in national security decision making over the last three decades. The reason for this benchmark is clear: All of the last eight Presidents have sought advice from a personal adviser. And, I suspect this trend will continue.

Origin of the NSC

It is not possible to discuss the NSC process without first understanding the environment that existed at the time of its creation. The National Security Council's birth was only one element of an overall restructuring of the entire national security apparatus, shortly after the Second World War. Nearly all of the controversy and heated debate focused on the prospect of an integrated military establishment with a single military budget. The War Department and President Truman favored a unified military under a single civilian secretary. The Navy bitterly opposed the proposed unification, fearing an Army-Air Force coalition would actively lobby to merge the Marines with the Army and give the naval air assets to the Air Force. Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal opposed a unified military concept, but knew that the Navy could not simply oppose service integration. (14:147) Therefore, he solicited the help of Ferdinand Eberstadt, a longtime confidant, to come up with an alternative. Eberstadt's final report recommended three separate service departments, continuation of the JCS concept, and creation of two integrating mechanisms: the National Security Council and the National Security Resources Board.² These two major bodies, operating at the pinnacle of government, would coordinate the activities of all civilian and military elements.

When compared with the heated debates over the proposed unification of the Army and Navy, creation of the NSC was the least controversial aspect of the National Security Act. However, it appears that Congress, as the principal proponent of the NSC, and President Truman each had different ideas about the role that the NSC should play in foreign policy decision making. These

² Originally known as the Council of Common Defense, the name was changed to the National Security Council by both the House and the Senate during the legislative process that created the subsequent National Security Act. (32:30)

differences were never fully resolved. During the 1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings, Navy Secretary Forrestal had made it clear that the most important part of the entire unification bill was the establishment of the National Security Council. The Council would provide for "*the formal coordination between the formulators of foreign policy and the formulators of military policy, [and] prevent us from coming face to face with war for which we are unwarned or militarily unprepared.*" (7:161) As envisioned by the Eberstadt Report, the NSC Staff would play a pivotal role in preparing the NSC agenda and providing essential information as the basis for NSC deliberations. The staff would also distribute the results of NSC deliberations to all applicable agencies for information and appropriate action.

When Congress debated the NSC issue, it concentrated its attention more on the issue of organizational membership and less on organizational mechanics. Congress wanted to preserve and underscore a fundamental principle of the nation's constitutional system: civilian control over the military establishment. (10:9) Therefore, Congress was most concerned that all members of the NSC should be civilians, with the military's point of view to be articulated through the civilian Secretary of Defense. Congress was less concerned with the NSC's role as a coordinating body, since the US had established coordinating boards during World Wars I and II.³ Therefore, Congress readily accepted Eberstadt's premise that there was a need for a regular and permanent body to coordinate national security policy, but under civilian control.

³ The Army Appropriations Act of 1916 established the Council of National Defense. Although economic in focus, it set the precedent for using coordination boards to handle complex tasks. In May, 1940, President Roosevelt established the National Defense Advisory Council (NDAC), a board of private citizens with the requisite expertise to mobilize the US economic industrial base for war. During the war, numerous ad hoc coordinating committees were established, but often proved counter productive. Consequently, Roosevelt relied primarily on the JCS and key advisers for advice. By 1945, their weekly meetings evolved into a more formal coordinating body, the State, War, Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC). (26:2-5)

From President Truman's perspective, the NSC concept was a double-edged sword. In the aftermath of the Second World War, President Truman realized the US needed an organization to coordinate the range of issues grouped under the rubric of national security. However, he was keenly aware that the NSC could encroach on his decision making authority and stressed that any coordinating body would only be advisory in nature. Truman's Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, believed that the power and function vested in the NSC by the Senate bill would dissipate the constitutional responsibility of the President in the conduct of foreign policy.⁴ He strongly recommended that the NSC be removed from National Security Act in its entirety, then enacted by executive order. (7:314) Therefore, the President would be able to determine the organization and function of the NSC, not Congress. Regardless of motivation, Marshall had asked a fundamental question. Why did Congress want to legislate how the Executive Branch organized for conducting national security policy? Oddly, Truman sided with Congress on this issue, perhaps feeling that the need for civilian control over the military establishment overrode the fear of NSC encroachment on executive decision making turf. Still, the Executive Branch remained concerned about the division of authority between the President and Congress in foreign policy issues.

Upon analysis of the Senate's draft bill describing NSC functions, Secretary of State Marshall demanded a change to the wording that ensured the preeminence of the President over the NSC. Originally, the Senate bill S.758 read, "*The function of the Council shall be to integrate our*

⁴ As Army Chief of Staff, General Marshall initially proposed military unification in 1943. In 1945, while testifying on the benefits of unification to the Senate Military Affairs Committee he stated, "Committees at best are cumbersome agencies, especially when membership owes loyalty and advancement to chiefs installed in completely separate governmental departments." (14:45) Therefore, as Secretary of State in 1947, Marshall may have had ulterior motives. The fact that

foreign and military policies. . . Subject to the authority of the President, decisions of the Council shall establish the approved policy of the departments and agencies represented in the Council." (7:314) However, the Executive Branch so strongly objected to the wording that Congress changed the bill to read, "*The function of the Council shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of foreign and military policies.*" (7:314) Therefore, the final language as written in Section 101 of Title I, Coordination for National Security, represented a compromise. Simply stated, the NSC's purpose was to:

- ◆ Advise the President on the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security, to enable more effective cooperation between the services and other Governmental departments in matters of national security.
- ◆ Assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the US in relation to our actual and potential military power, as directed by the President.
- ◆ Consider policies on matters of common interest to the Government departments and agencies concerned with the national security, and to make recommendations to the President.
- ◆ Make recommendations and other reports to the President as deemed appropriate or as the President may require. (26:7)

The Act limited NSC membership to the President and Vice President; Secretaries of State, Defense, Army, Navy, and Air Force; and the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board.⁵ The President could also invite secretaries from other departments as required, but further expansion required Senate approval. The NSC was provided with a staff headed by a civilian executive secretary, appointed by the President. Unfortunately, NSC staff functions were not addressed in the National Security Act because Congress felt that it would infringe on the President's right to organize the Executive Branch administratively as he deemed necessary.

the NSC was a major product of Secretary of the Navy Forrestal's campaign to torpedo Marshall's plan for military unification made the NSC especially unpalatable.

⁵ The 1949 amendment to the National Security Act removed the service secretaries from the NSC, but added the JCS. This was in response to the Hoover Commission's review of the NSC

In retrospect, the National Security Act allowed the President maximum flexibility to use (or not use) the NSC. In this regard, Congress deferred to the President--the head of government and head of state--as the principal figure who must define national policy. However, Congress created the NSC by statute, complete with its own budget line and authority. There is no doubt that Congress wanted the NSC to play a major advisory role in the coordination of national security policy.

and subsequent recommendation to establish a better working relationship between the NSC and the JCS. (26: 9)

Why Change?

An informal relationship between the NSC and the National Security Adviser has existed now for nearly four decades, why formalize it now? There are three important reasons for a more institutionalized relationship: First, the de facto relationships between the NSC Staff, the Executive Secretary, and the National Security Adviser are contrary to statutory law. More importantly, there is an distinct potential for the National Security Adviser to actually circumvent the NSC decision making process, furthering his own agenda. However, the first two reasons for change are symptoms of a third, more fundamental problem. Both Congress and the President disagree on the level of involvement each should have in foreign policy decision making.

Questionable Relationships

The relationship between the NSC and the National Security Adviser is important and should not be defined by solely presidential fiat or the Adviser's character. The NSC was mandated by Congress in the National Security Act of 1947. In that mandate, Congress expressly stated that the Executive Secretary would be the titular head of the NSC Staff, whose function was to support the NSC as a collective body. (28:2) On the other hand, the position of National Security Adviser was established by Presidential preference. To this day, the position remains funded by the White House. While this signals a clear intent of Presidents to make the National Security Adviser a "personal" adviser, the National Security Adviser has emerged over time as the de facto head of the National Security Council Staff as well. How did this happen?

Under the Eisenhower Administration, the National Security Adviser became the titular head of the NSC staff instead of the Executive Secretary. In 1953, Eisenhower appointed Robert Cutler, his first "Special Assistant for National Security Affairs," to serve as head of a senior-

level Policy Planning Board, created within the NSC staff. This made Cutler explicitly responsible for preparing all NSC policy papers. While the Executive Secretary, James S. Lay , continued to head the NSC Staff, his position slowly became solely administrative in nature, as Cutler began to play a major role in managing the NSC machinery. (32:78) Over time, there was a marriage of convenience: the National Security Adviser needed a staff to help him in his expanding role as presidential adviser, and a languishing NSC Staff (under the Executive Secretary) needed a champion of substance to lead it into bureaucratic relevance. (37:13-14) Five years later the National Security Adviser's power base expanded dramatically.

In 1958, the Eisenhower Administration faced two near-simultaneous crises, one in the Far East and one in Europe. (17:239-242) While the NSC was well prepared to handle the crisis in the Taiwan Strait, Eisenhower did not use the advisory body to handle the Berlin crisis.⁶ Instead, he appointed his new National Security Adviser, Gordon Gray, as head of the contingency planning staff in charge of developing four alternative courses of military action for use in the Berlin crisis. In this capacity, Gray became an official with virtual command powers in crisis management. (32:88-89) The crisis in Berlin provided the impetus for the emergence of the modern day National Security Adviser, a person with broad powers over policy planning and crisis response.

Under the Kennedy administration, the NSC staff (and the Adviser as its head) acquired a semi-political character and identification solely with the Presidential perspective. In essence, the

⁶ The escalation of tension over Berlin occurred on November 10, 1958, when Nikita Khrushchev announced that the city would become a "free city" with no armed forces permitted there. This would occur in six months, at which time the German Democratic Republic would ensure the sovereignty of its capital city. In essence, the Soviets declared the Potsdam Agreement null and void. (17:241-242) This was unacceptable to Eisenhower, who ordered the military to begin planning alternative military options.

NSC Staff was no longer solely responsible to the NSC as a collective body. With the administration of Richard M. Nixon, the National Security Adviser and "his" staff became a more powerful and independent actor, totally separate from the NSC it was designed to support. Indeed, the position of National Security Adviser, originally intended to be the President's agent on the NSC, became an independent power in his own right. And, as history has shown, the President has often amended or ignored the NSC organization and structure as originally established by Congress, to fit his personal leadership style. However, by creating the position of National Security Adviser, but not defining its relationship to the NSC, the NSC Staff, or the Executive Secretary, the Executive Branch created an opportunity to orchestrate national security policy beyond the reach of congressional oversight. When that opportunity became reality, the NSC process was circumvented.

Circumvention of the NSC Process

By creating a National Security Adviser (who controls the NSC staff), a President can conceivably create foreign policy from the White House. Clearly, this is exactly what the drafter of the NSC concept sought to preclude. According to Navy Secretary James V. Forrestal, the NSC's role was to envelop the President with a broader, collegial process of making decisions. (12:166) This would prevent poor executive decisions based on presidential fiat. However, Congress was sensitive to the President's central role in making foreign policy and limited the NSC to an advisory rather than authoritative role. Still, the original intent was clear: collective decision making was the key to an integrated national security policy. Unfortunately, the rise in power of the National Security Adviser provided a means of bypassing the NSC decision making process. Nowhere is this better displayed than when Henry A. Kissinger was at the helm as National Security Adviser.

Most of the criticism of the Nixon NSC centered on the dominant role played by Kissinger. In fact, Kissinger chaired four of the top six interdepartmental groups.⁷ Over time, his position in these key committees gave him control over virtually the entire NSC apparatus, leading to charges that the system now suffered from over centralization and domination by one man. Indeed, the magnitude of Kissinger's staff suggested that Nixon had created his own personal foreign ministry within the White House. During Nixon's first term, Kissinger virtually outgunned the State Department for control of foreign policy, and soon overshadowed Secretary of State William Rogers. Indeed, Kissinger stifled all dissent within the NSC and the rest of the national security apparatus. (26:16) Furthermore, his direct involvement in "shuttle diplomacy" as National Security Adviser effectively removed national security policy from congressional oversight. Kissinger's accession to Secretary of State in September 1973, while retaining his National Security Adviser position, gave him unprecedented power. In essence, he changed the role of the Adviser, from one who coordinated policy options, to one who would be pivotal in policy deliberations. Suffice it to say, Kissinger was Nixon's primary adviser, negotiator, foreign policy point man, and contact point with the bureaucracy, press, and public.

Unfortunately, Kissinger's short circuiting of the NSC process was repeated by President Carter's National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski.⁸ In this case, Brzezinski became a virtual gatekeeper for all national security policy. As Chairman of President Carter's Special

⁷ Kissinger chaired the Washington Special Action Group (WASAG), the NSC Intelligence Committee, the Defense Program Review Committee, and the Senior Policy Review Group. (26:16) These four groups developed clear alternative choices for decision makers, but also ensure that control of national security decision making remained at the top.

⁸ Brzezinski and Kissinger were long-time rivals: Columbia versus Harvard; Democrat versus Republican. Perhaps it was a foregone conclusion that Brzezinski would try to "outdo" Kissinger in the role of National Security Adviser.

Coordination Committee (SCC), Brzezinski set the agenda for arms control negotiations, crisis management, and covert actions. He also sat on the Policy Review Committee (PRC). Decisions from either committee were recorded by "his" NSC staff. Any PRC or SCC recommendations or decision papers for the President would go through Brzezinski first. (4:57-65) This meant that, as the National Security Adviser, Brzezinski had the power to interpret the policy recommendations of department principals before they reached the President. Carter even codified this "gatekeeper" function for Brzezinski through Presidential Directive and by elevating the National Security Adviser's position to cabinet level status. As Brzezinski remarked in his book entitled *Power and Principle*, "*I would be in a position to shape the agenda and thus to influence the outcome of our deliberations. The role of the Secretaries was formally enhanced, but certain key levers were reserved for the President's Assistant.*" (4:63) One of those "key" levers was access to the President, and Brzezinski guarded it jealously. His handling of the President's daily intelligence briefing given by the CIA highlights this point.

From the very first day of the Presidency, I insisted that the morning intelligence briefing be given to the President by me and by no one else... [CIA Director Stansfield Turner] not too subtly reminded me that he was the principal intelligence officer of the US. government and that it was therefore odd that I should be giving the President an intelligence briefing every morning...As soon as he [Turner] left, I went over to Carter's Appointments Secretary, Tim Kraft, and told him that as of the next morning the President's schedule instead of listing me as giving the President the "intelligence briefing," should say that I was giving the 'national security briefing.' The next day I phoned Stan and drew his attention to the President's schedule as published in the morning paper, adding that I felt the problem was now resolved. The matter was never again raised, and I continued to brief the President alone during the entire four years. (4:64)

By controlling the morning intelligence briefing (exclusive access to the President) and his authority to set the foreign policy agenda, Brzezinski significantly influenced foreign policy decision making in the Carter Administration. Indeed, his outspokenness on foreign policy

created such a rivalry with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance that Vance eventually resigned in protest.⁹ In fact, it was Brzezinski's aggressive role in policymaking that prompted a Congressional inquiry into who was in charge of foreign policy in the Executive Branch. As Nebraska Senator Edward Zorinsky commented,

It is necessary that the Senate come to grips with the fact that there are two Secretaries of State within the Executive Branch of this government. [The Senate must] do what it can to assure that in the field of foreign policy, the Executive Branch. . .speaks with one voice. We are perceived as having two Secretaries of State, not only by the American public but also by foreign diplomats. Many of them come to my office and ask where to go for answers to their questions. They come to me as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. I immediately direct them to the Secretary of State and to the State Department. You would be surprised how many of them tell me, 'Well, they direct me to Dr. Brzezinski's office after I go down to the State Department.' This leaves a very strong implication that there are two places to check with. There should be one. (30:27)

When the National Security Adviser eclipses the NSC as the primary adviser to the President, the country is not being well served. Unfortunately, National Security Advisers have used their proximity and ready access to the President to exclude the advice of those charged with policy formulation and implementation. When that happens, national security decision making suffers. In short, it took a little over two decades before Eisenhower's innocuous "Assistant to the President" became an aggressive National Security Adviser with not only the ability to circumvent the NSC process, but the precedent for doing so.¹⁰

⁹ During the fall of the Shah of Iran, Brzezinski had effectively cut the State Department out of the decision making process by squelching views contrary to his own. He disregarded the continual advice from the Iran Desk Officer, the Ambassador to Iran, and George Ball, a special counselor appointed by Carter--none of whom recommended a military coup as Brzezinski wanted. (11:100-104)

¹⁰ Both Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski used the NSC staffs as a source of power to exert their influence over their respective Secretaries of State. For an excellent account of these two power struggles, refer to Andrianopoulos, Gerry A., *Kissinger and Brzezinski*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991, chapters 6 and 7.

A Fundamental Disagreement Over Power

The inevitable power struggle between the National Security Adviser and the NSC organization is a byproduct of a larger struggle over "shared" powers of foreign policymaking between Congress and the President, and within the Executive Branch itself. In creating the NSC, Congress wanted the President to have access to collective advice from Council members who had operating responsibility for the implementation of national security policies. Still, they fully intended to exercise oversight of the Executive Branch's conduct of foreign policy by holding the principal policy makers accountable for their actions. One way to accomplish this was through the Senate's power of advice and consent of the President's choices for Secretaries of State and Defense, the Director of the CIA, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In addition, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's ability to influence foreign policy has often paralleled the importance of the Secretary of State. He has often provided the Executive Branch an informal conduit for Senate views on national security issues. (22:425) Finally, through its investigation authority, Congress can bring maximum publicity to bear on various issues and individuals, and can examine the historical record in depth and detail. (17:133)

Because the National Security Adviser had become a principal policy maker in his own right, yet was not subject to Senate approval, Congress attempted to rectify this inconsistency. In 1979, Senator Zorinsky introduced legislation that would have established the positions of Assistant and Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and required that these positions--if filled by the President--be subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. (30:129) The proposed legislation was defeated on the floor. Yet, Congressmen and even former National Security Adviser Brzezinski believe there is much to be gained from a more institutionalized

relationship between NSC principals. (5:14-16). Eight years later, the issue of the National Security Adviser's accountability to Congress resurfaced during the Iran-Contra investigation. In the Report of the President's Special Review Board (February 26th, 1987), a bipartisan Congressional committee hotly debated the issue of institutionalizing the position of National Security Adviser. Again, in a partisan majority decision, the proposal failed. The Special Review Board concluded that there wasn't a failure of the NSC system, but a failure to use the system properly. Therefore, legislated remedies would not provide any measured protection, but simply unnecessarily intrude into the business of the President. (38: v-4, v-5) However, the Iran-Contra affair clearly underscored the lack of clarity about the proper relationship between the President and the NSC.

In sum, the current relationship between the NSC Staff and the National Security Adviser violates the current NSC statute. Also, National Security Advisers have demonstrated the capability to usurp the NSC process, and Congress has a valid claim for accountability from those who make policy. Certainly, legislative reform would help alleviate some of these issues . It is one of the abiding ironies that the drafters of the NSC concept had hoped the NSC would constrain the President by tying him more closely and formally to his cabinet for advice. In reality, the result was to lessen his dependence on them by providing the President control of the NSC staff through his own appointed National Security Adviser. (25:61)

What Role Should the National Security Adviser Play?

I think it is essential that the national security adviser make sure that all options presented to the President for decision are fully integrated ones, that is, that all agency views are represented and that all the pros and cons are set forth, together with an estimate of the possible consequences of the adoption of each of the options.

Brent Scowcroft
Former National Security Adviser (34:24)

The most fundamental role that a National Security Adviser should play is that of honest broker for national security affairs. Effective policymaking hinges on a system of multiple advocacy, where the President makes decisions based on evaluation of a wide range of viewpoints and policy options.¹¹ Related to his role as honest broker, the National Security Adviser must be what Alexander L. George calls the "Custodian-Manager" of the policymaking process. Finally, the National Security Adviser must become the President's vicar of strategy.

The Honest Broker

The original framers of the NSC concept believed the key to effective decision making was through conscious deliberation over all the available options. Through a system of multiple advocacy, that belief can be achieved. In a system of multiple advocacy, there is virtue in what is a necessary vice--a multiplicity of ideas and perspectives created by the division of bureaucratic labor. NSC principals offer solutions to foreign policy issues based on departmental perspectives,

¹¹ Not all agree that multiple advocacy is the best decision making tool. One of former President Ford's personal advisers was quoted as saying, "Multiple advocacy is nice on paper. It just can't work in the White House. We don't have time to make sure all of the advisers have access to the President. This is not a day-care; it is survival of the fittest." (8:45-46) In his book, *The Commanders*, Bob Woodward relates that even the Bush Administration didn't fully adhere to a multiple advocacy system of decision making when discussing whether or not to invade Kuwait. While alternative courses of action were discussed, they weren't fully developed. (42:297-322).

thus defining their differences instead of submerging them. In the end, they arrive at an improved quality of alternatives and the arguments used to support them. (11:45) Therefore, the NSC is one forum where a multiple advocacy system would be beneficial for providing balanced participation in foreign policy deliberations. However, this model for decision making is only effective when there is an honest broker who can manage the inevitable conflict between NSC principals.¹² Can the National Security Adviser be that honest broker? Indeed, he must. The President simply cannot devote the time to manage the multiple advocacy system on a daily basis. Still, he must have the major advantage of multiple advocacy--fully developed options. In reality, the President has little time to play magistrate over departmental "lawyers" pleading their cases. Instead, he constantly relies on short bursts of information--often from his National Security Adviser--to accurately, but succinctly define the scope of each issue. This does not mean that departmental perspectives are unimportant or that the President should not value the council of NSC principals when time permits. It's simply a matter of the limited time available for information processing. Therefore, the National Security Adviser must realize that his true value as a facilitator lies in his ability to objectively frame each issue for the President in a manageable format. He must ensure the President makes major decisions with full knowledge of the options available and their likely consequences. If the National Security Adviser aligns himself solely with the President's point of view, his ability to objectively represent each department's view is

12 The conflict engendered by a multiple advocacy system can become intense. In the past, Advisers have resorted to backstabbing and media ploys to foster their own agendas while undermining their rivals' viewpoints. For example, during the fall of the Shah of Iran, Brzezinski was frustrated by an overall lack of intelligence about the growing crisis in Iran. He convinced Carter to send a note of censure to CIA Director Stansfield Turner. To soften the blow, an identical memo was sent to the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser. However, a duplicate memo was shown to journalists visiting the White House that same day, but the memo was only addressed to Turner. (39:114; 4: 367)

impaired. In fact, Alexander George, a recognized expert in International Relations, warns that when the National Security Adviser serves as the President's policy advocate, spokesman, or special emissary, he is assuming roles that are inconsistent with the idea of an honest broker.

(16:197)

With every additional task accepted, the National Security Adviser's role as an honest broker is diminished. This was evident when Johnson used his National Security Adviser, McGeorge Bundy, as the principal negotiator to end the civil war in the Dominican Republic. During the Nixon Administration, Kissinger became a virtual one-man POW negotiating team in Paris and played a crucial role as special emissary to China. However, departmental and agency experts were generally excluded from these events. Thus, the benefits of their knowledge were lost and the morale and loyalty of the bureaucracy suffered. Additionally, the sheer amount of time spent outside Washington meant that the National Security Adviser's role as honest broker among NSC principals was not being fulfilled.

Similarly, if the National Security Adviser uses the NSC Staff as a power base for championing his own agenda, then clearly there would be a conflict of interest. For example, President Johnson's National Security Adviser, Walt Rostow, gradually replaced the collective advice of the NSC principals during the Vietnam War. As a result, Rostow was quickly viewed as an ideologue, screening out information inconsistent with his belief that the US was winning the war in Vietnam. In turn, he continued to reinforce Johnson's preconception that the US would eventually prevail. (12:200) Yet, it was Kissinger who serves as the best example of a National Security Adviser playing power politics in the foreign policy arena. His predominance in foreign policy stemmed from his unique intellectual abilities, skill at bureaucratic maneuvering, and a determination not to be restrained by the bureaucracy or congressional inhibitions.(6:94) He also

greatly expanded the role of the National Security Adviser as a public spokesman, eclipsing all others as the foreign policy spokesman for the administration. In essence, Kissinger became a media star, the darling of diplomacy, and a de facto secretary of state. With the resignation of Secretary Rogers in 1973, Kissinger became a virtual foreign policy czar, assuming the title of Secretary of State and retaining the title of National Security Adviser.

Custodian-manager of the Policymaking Process

The National Security Adviser can perform the role of honest broker best when he also performs the function of custodian-manager. According to Alexander George, the custodian-manager must:

- ◆ Balance actor resources within the policymaking system
- ◆ Strengthen weaker advocates
- ◆ Bring new advisers in to argue for unpopular options
- ◆ Arrange for independent evaluation of options when necessary
- ◆ Monitor the workings of the policymaking process. (16:195-196)

While all these sub-functions are important, none is more important than monitoring the workings of the policymaking process. In essence, the National Security Adviser is the manager of that decision making process.

The National Security Adviser has a threefold responsibility as the chief manager of the decision making process. First, he must ensure the President is informed of key issues that he may be forced to address. Therefore, the National Security Adviser must determine the appropriate forum for issue consideration. While every issue need not be addressed by an assembly of NSC principals, each issue should be properly analyzed and policy options subjected to critical review. The resulting options and analyses must then be presented clearly and concisely to key decision makers. As former NSC staffer Philip Odeen points out, "*Managing the decision making process*

is a time consuming and demanding, but important task. Unless it is done well, poor decisions are likely to be made and excessive time required of the president and the cabinet." (31:344) In essence, the National Security Adviser must be more concerned with the decision making process, and less concerned with influencing the decision itself. Secondly, the National Security Adviser must ensure the President can cope with the volume of issues coming to him for decision. He must identify the major issues among the myriad of issues that are neither critical or pressing. This sounds easier than it is, since departments and agencies are reluctant to expose their "dirty laundry." For instance, force structure deficiencies in airlift and sealift have a major impact on the military's ability to project the forces required to win two near-simultaneous major regional contingencies, as called for in the President's National Security Strategy. These deficiencies were not the addressed when Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman John Shalikashvili testified to Congress about the military's force projection capability. Quite the contrary, he touted the military's ability to rapidly to deploy to Saudi Arabia in the fall of 1994 as the reason why Saddam Hussein didn't cross the Kuwaiti border. In reality, four of the twelve cargo ships rushing tanks and ammunition to the Middle East broke down enroute. (20:15) Another factor that makes it difficult to force decisions on major issues is the political fallout from making those tough decisions. Base closures and reduction in National Guard/Reserve units are prime examples where political costs outweigh making sensible force structure decisions.

Finally, the National Security Adviser must ensure that the President appears to be in charge. This translates into preparing the President for media events and foreign visits. Major decisions should be announced by the White House, if possible. And, the National Security Adviser should minimize divisiveness between executive agencies, not contribute to it. Brzezinski's well publicized differences with Vance effectively undermined any cohesion that may have existed

among NSC principals during the Carter Administration. Similarly, constant infighting between George Schultz, Caspar Weinburger, and the White House Staff only served notice that a weak National Security Adviser like Robert McFarlane had neither the skill nor the stature to focus NSC principals toward common policy goals. (3:32)

The Role as Vicar of Strategy

It is increasingly evident that the coordination of foreign policy and the infusion of it with strategic content will have to come from this office.

Zbigniew Brzezinski (4:48)

Under the Eisenhower Administration, the NSC was institutionalized and expanded, with clear lines of responsibility and authority. Ike wanted the NSC to perform the functions of strategic planning. To achieve this function, he created the Planning Board. Under the Eisenhower Administration, the NSC was institutionalized and expanded, with clear lines of responsibility and authority. Ike wanted the NSC to perform the functions of strategic planning and policy coordination. To achieve this, he created the Policy Planning Board and Operations Coordinating Board (OCB). With these changes, the NSC closely resembled what the Eberstadt Report envisioned as the President's principal arm for formulating and coordinating military, international, and domestic affairs. (26:10) The formalized structure and organization under the Eisenhower Administration allowed the NSC to handle an increasing volume of matters, including comprehensive assessments of the country's basic national security strategy. These assessments served as interagency coordination tools and served the basis for military planning, foreign policymaking and effective policy implementation. However, the complexity of the system opened it to criticism.

It was Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson who levied the strongest criticism against Ike's NSC architecture. In a speech to the National War College on April 16th, 1959, Jackson charged that Eisenhower's NSC mechanism was "*a dangerously misleading facade*," that had not and could not produce a coherent and purposeful national program. (21:78-81) Jackson's message was simple: "*Our governmental processes do not produce clearly defined and purposeful strategy for the cold war.*" (21:79) He then sought and received Congressional approval for hearings through creation of a Senate Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery. The Jackson Committee found that "*The [National Security] Council. . . appears only marginally involved in helping resolve many of the most important problems which affect the future course of national security policy.*" (21:84) It is important to note that the Jackson Committee did not criticize Eisenhower Administration for attempting to develop a national strategy; rather, his NSC Staff needed focus and direction. What an appropriate job for the National Security Adviser.

The National Security Adviser must be the President's vicar of strategy, a chief facilitator for matching the instruments of power to the interests of the state. His most essential duty is to see that he and the NSC Staff focus on the foreign policy "horizon," enabling the President to build a comprehensive vision. Therefore, the National Security Adviser must shape the course of events, rather than react to them.¹³ He must be able to look beyond the events of the day. While intellectual ability is important, the National Security Adviser must also be mentally flexible to anticipate how foreign nations perceive world events. Yet, a strategic sense of mind is rare in Americana, where crisis management has become the rule, not the exception. This was clearly

¹³ Herein lies a dilemma. While the National Security Adviser must strive to be an honest broker, he inevitably shapes strategy due to his proximity and access to the President. Yet, the Adviser must not abuse his inherent role as gatekeeper to dictate strategy.

demonstrated during the Kennedy Administration, where the focus was on current operations. As Kennedy's Under Secretary of State For Economic Affairs, George W. Ball, recalled:

Kennedy was the pragmatist par excellence; although he sometimes alluded to conceptual ideas in his speeches, his main concern was action and day-to-day results. When one tried to point out the long-range implications of a current problem or how it meshed or collided with other major national interests, Kennedy would often say, politely but impatiently, "Let's not worry about five years from now, what do we do tomorrow? (1:167)

Unfortunately, Kennedy's successful handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis created a theory of crisis management where, in McNamara's words, "*There is no longer any such thing as strategy, only crisis management.*" (9:7) Ironically, the success in crisis management during the Cuban Missile Crisis led to the feebleness of American strategy in Vietnam. According to Eliot Cohen:

In no area do these [failures in strategy] appear more clearly than in the escalation of the Vietnam war; here, the incremental commitments of troops bore little relation to any strategic conception of their use, and the tightly controlled escalation of the air war over North Vietnam included the personal selection of bombing targets by President Johnson and his national security advisor, Walt Rostow. The concept of 'the gradual squeeze' accorded nicely with the doctrine of crisis management. (9:9)

Clearly, the National Security Adviser serves the nation best if he can create a long-range planning structure with the requisite authority to look at US national security issues from a strategic perspective. Within this strategic planning structure, the Adviser must ensure the following functions are accomplished:

Long-range planning: The National Security Adviser must provide the foresight--the ability to look into the future and see possibilities and relationships that others cannot or will not see. Yet, as Robert Hunter warns, "*Given the pace at which the US government is challenged to act in international affairs, it is rare that there is sustained effort to plan for the future, to map out a long-term course of action, or to ground long-range policy in an abiding sense of purpose.*"(19:27) This is especially difficult when each President's mandate is up for renewal

every four years. Indeed, continuity between administrations may be difficult if not impossible to achieve. Still, the NSC staff must provide a way to integrate all the nation's instruments of power to achieve that plan for the future. They must be ready to use nontraditional instruments of power to accomplish the nation's interests. They must integrate emerging technologies, international monetary affairs, non-governmental capabilities, and domestic requirements into a cogent plan for the future.

Strategic Intelligence: The National Security Adviser must realize that the post Cold-War world is infinitely more complex than the bipolar struggle for policy makers to understand. The questions they want answers to are often unknown or unknowable. While the Cold War intelligence gathering organizations were fairly adept at finding the answer to secrets (something concrete that can be stolen or discerned by sensors), they are not able to unlock tomorrow's mysteries--the unknown or unknowable (29:88). The key to developing future strategies will lie in understanding the global structure of power. That won't be easy. As Joseph Nye, the Chairman of the National Intelligence Center aptly pointed out in the fall of 1994:

Today, the structure of power is like a three-dimensional chess game. The top, military board is unipolar, with the United States being the only country capable of projection global military force. The middle economic board is tripolar. The United States, the European Union and Japan account for two-thirds of the world economy. China's dramatic economic growth may make this board quadripolar by the turn of the century. The bottom board consists of diverse transnational relationships outside the control of governments, including financial flows, drug trafficking, terrorism and degradation of the ozone layer. On this board, there are no poles. (29:87)

The intelligence required by policy makers to play on tomorrow's three dimensional chess board must be truly, "all-source" in nature. Therefore, the NSC Staff must insist on non departmental analyses as well as traditional political-military analyses. Information on emerging technologies, international monetary affairs, non governmental "wants" and "weaknesses," and domestic

limitations will all affect national security policy. The National Security Adviser must therefore ensure intelligence organizations interact with policy makers to help them make better choices in a more complex future.¹⁴ To that end, they must have unfiltered access to decision makers.

National Resources Integration: Today, the line between domestic and international affairs is gone. However, the requirement to match finite resources to seemingly infinite priorities remains valid. The original National Security Act of 1947 established a National Security Resources Board to plan for coordination of programs for the effective use of the nation's industrial and natural resources in meeting the needs of the military and civilians during war. (28:6) The point we must realize is that the President needs advice on alternative military and economic programs in peacetime as well as war. It is clear that post cold war changes in defense spending patterns can substantially affect our economic growth, employment patterns, balance of payments, and the ability to fund non defense programs. However, it must be done without destroying the defense industrial base. As the vicar of strategy, the National Security Adviser must develop the structure required to integrate foreign and domestic policy in a way that best provides for our national security needs.

In sum, presidents make poor strategists because they are so easily captured by the moment. However, that does not negate the requirement for a strategist at this level of government. The strategic functions-- long range planning, strategic intelligence and national resources integration must be accomplished or America will certainly stumble blindly into the future. Someone must be

¹⁴ The emphasis here is in dialogue, not merely the publication of the National Intelligence Estimate. The goal is to get ideas into policy makers minds at the right time, providing alternative scenarios during periods of uncertainty. Therefore, the policy maker's agenda may dictate when the intelligence information is most effective.

the vicar of strategy. Because of his closeness to the President, and his obligation to be an honest broker, that someone should be the National Security Adviser.

Recommendations

What actions must occur to clarify and strengthen the relationship between the National Security Adviser and the NSC organization as a whole? Unfortunately, the solutions involve changing the way the President, Congress, and the National Security Adviser have done business for the last forty-seven years. Yet, change must occur, and it must add stability and clarity to a very complicated national security decision making process.

For the President

The President must understand that the National Security Adviser actually serves two masters--the President and the National Security Council as a whole. Yet, the service required to make both happy are inseparably intertwined. The Adviser must look at issues from the perspective of the President, yet remain sensitive to the NSC's views in order to offer the President sage advice. Still, the National Security Adviser's ability to be an effective facilitator of national policymaking process stems from the fact that he is the President's personal adviser and carries clout in the political arena. But, equally important is that both the President and other NSC principals rely heavily on a strong National Security Adviser and NSC Staff to run the policymaking process--the lifeblood of national security decision making. Indeed, the absence of either an influential National Security Adviser or an effective administrative machinery has been cited by numerous critics as a major factor contributing to the Iran-Contra fiasco.¹⁵ As John Prados aptly points out,

¹⁵ In its report to President Reagan, the Tower Commission recognized that the NSC policymaking process works best when the National Security Adviser, who has the greatest interest in its success, should chair the interagency committees. However, John Prados believes that the NSC Staff was no longer willing to grind out acceptable alternatives to the Iran hostage

Something is wrong with the system when the NSC principals advise against a weapons sale, the Vice President says he opposed it, and the President says he does not remember it, but the sale occurs anyway and the proceeds are diverted to another cause altogether, one previously proscribed by a coordinate branch of government. (32:568)

A second area of presidential concern should be the tendency to concentrate foreign policymaking at the White House. This power shift is largely due to a triumph of politics and ideology over *realpolitik*. Increasingly, Presidents are using foreign policy for political reasons, and do not trust a career bureaucracy (like the State Department) that they are largely unfamiliar with. This has created a balance of power shift to the National Security Adviser at the expense of the Secretary of State. As a former Secretary of State and former National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger is in a unique position to evaluate the consequences of such a shift in power. In an interview with Garrick Utley on the NBC "Today" Show, Kissinger made the following observations when asked about who should have the dominant influence on the President's foreign policy decisions.

. . . In my judgment, which I did not always practice when I was in office as Security Adviser, there's no question in my mind that the Secretary of State should have the dominant influence; and that if the President feels he's not on the same wavelength with his Secretary of State, then he should replace him and get another. . If you want continuity in foreign policy, you need to have the professionals engaged. . But it's more convenient and easier to do it with a small staff out of the White House, even though in the long run it isn't good for the operation of the country. (24:142)

Yet, Kennedy put up with Dean Rusk's inability or unwillingness to fill his role as the leading agent in foreign policy. As a result, his National Security Adviser, McGeorge Bundy played a larger role in policymaking. This same trend was replayed in the Administrations of Johnson,

issue through the normal interagency committee process. Rather, senior NSC Staffers sought to circumvent standard operating procedures in an effort to achieve Reagan's goal of getting the

Nixon (when Kissinger was National Security Adviser), and Carter. (26: 12-20) Our nation simply can't afford to have a weak Secretary of State, or the perception abroad that both the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser are both spokesmen for US. foreign policy. The fact that many presidents select weak secretaries of state points to a fundamental flaw in US foreign policymaking. While the President has the right to develop foreign policy in any manner he sees fit, he must rely on the State Department for much of the foreign policy implementation. To isolate an entire department by giving it weak leadership would therefore be counter productive to the end state sought by the President. So, if the President succumbs to impatience with the State Department, and empowers his Adviser to conduct diplomacy, he damages the country in the long run. (22:434) The balance of power in the Executive Branch must remain in equilibrium to maintain a system of multiple advocacy, and the system must ultimately speak with one voice.

Finally, the President or Vice President should attempt to chair all NSC meetings. Perhaps no other act would help elevate the functioning of the NSC as an organization. This would help ensure more equitable treatment of each NSC principal and encourage a more collegial atmosphere. It would also guarantee regular attendance by other NSC principals and infuse a new sense of purpose in the NSC process.

Congressional Action

While Congressional powers are not as strong as the President's in the area of foreign policy, they are substantial. However, there should be concern over the growing number of Congressional inquiries into the affairs of the Executive Branch. This is primarily due to

hostages released, in spite of the rules. (32:538)

problems, such as Nixon's secret war in Cambodia, Watergate, the Iran hostage crisis, and the Iran-Contra affair. These incidents have made Congress hesitant to leave major foreign policy decisions solely to the Executive Branch. (13:134) Therefore, ever increasing Congressional oversight of the NSC will be a fact of life. Yet, this oversight is often "too little and too late." Instead, Congress must be willing to attack three major issues of substance--stability in the NSC organization, clarification of NSC functions, and the role of the National Security Adviser in the NSC process. These issues must be resolved through legislation.

According to fellow Air War College colleague Richard Price, two legislative reforms are necessary to provide stability, organization, and clarity in the NSC process. First, Congress must legislate a permanent NSC senior committee structure, composed of policy planning, policy coordination, and crisis management divisions.

The policy planning committee would handle long-range [strategic] policy planning (similar to Eisenhower's), preferably headed by the Secretary of State or his deputy, since State should logically be the focal point for long term U.S. international policy...The policy coordination/implementation committee (also a' la Eisenhower) would oversee the effective implementation of continuing national security policies, and headed by the national security adviser [as custodian-manager of the NSC process]...The crisis management committee would do just that, headed perhaps by the Secretary of Defense or his deputy since crisis response planning and actions usually revolve around the use of military forces in some fashion. (33:22-23)

Concurrently, the NSC Staff should be reorganized into three sections, each section designed to support the three new senior committee divisions (long-range planning, policy implementation, and crisis management). While the President could make these same changes through Executive Order, Congressional legislation would give permanence--and stability--to a single NSC structure. What's more, it removes the temptation for Presidents and National Security Advisers to amend

the NSC organization for political or personal advantage. Finally, greater organizational stability should lead to more efficiency, due to clearer lines of responsibility and authority.

The second change Colonel Price recommended was legislation prohibiting the National Security Adviser or his staff from engaging in operational activities, unless specifically authorized—in writing—by the President. These situations would be limited to occasions where other governmental departments or agencies are ill-suited to the task.

I envision this to be similar to 'findings' the President is now required to make in writing for certain intelligence activities to be conducted...[This statute should serve] as a means to mandate the use of the traditional, statutory agencies and departments to perform necessary operations in their areas of responsibility and expertise. This would compel greater interagency cooperation and hopefully preclude divisive behind-the-scenes secret 'Lone Ranger' initiatives. (33:22)

Not only would such a law compel the use of the proper agency for each operation, it would go a long way in reducing the ongoing turf battles and personality conflicts between NSC principals.

Finally, I believe that Congress should require that all National Security Advisers be subject to Senate advice and consent. It would provide congressional sanction of the President's closest adviser, but should stop short of making the position on par with other NSC principals. In addition, congressional language should emphasize the role of the Adviser as an honest broker. What's more, since the Adviser would be subject to Senate testimony, a President would be less likely to attempt to orchestrate national security policy solely through his Adviser, who is no longer beyond the reach of congressional oversight. The fact remains; one of the National Security Adviser's two masters is the NSC organization established by Congressional statute. Therefore, Congress should not be the last to know what the National Security Adviser is up to.

For the National Security Adviser

Many political scientists, including former National Security Adviser Brzezinski, would like to see the position of National Security Adviser elevated to the height of permanent cabinet-level status. After all, this would just provide *de jure* recognition of the present *de facto* situation. I strongly disagree with this proposal. The key to an effective National Security Adviser is his willingness and capability to work in the background as the honest broker in a system of multiple advocacy. Appearing in the public limelight and voicing major policy decisions is hopefully a lost art, reminiscent only of past flamboyant Advisers, Kissinger and Brzezinski. Still, the National Security Adviser can and will continue to be a major contributor to the national security decision making process, simply by virtue of his proximity to the President. Also, as custodian-manager of the policymaking process (as chief of the NSC Staff), he is at a critical crossroads where policy is translated into action. Yet his true value is in the ability to remain focused on the horizon. In an age where images on television can incite a public ground swell of support for or against the tragedy of the day, someone must ensure that national treasure and the political capital of public support not be expended for secondary matters. Indeed, the National Security Adviser must ensure appropriate integration of our nation's resources. While the Cold War may be in the rearview mirror, we must avoid a euphoric feeling that all things are possible. There must be a focal point--a framework for the future. As former Secretary James Schlesinger appropriately points out:

With so many conflicting objectives and with an inability to focus those means appropriate for achieving a limited set of objectives, now foreign policy is likely to be shaped by a capricious flow of events--rather than defined guideposts and a careful plan. In the absence of established guideposts our policies will be determined by impulse and image. (35:18)

The National Security Adviser can and should provide the framework policy makers need to judge international events. After all, he should have the clearest picture of the President's vision. In that sense, he has an important role to play on the NSC senior policy planning committee as a vicar of strategy. Without a framework, policy is apt to be steered by popular emotions, daily headlines, or the latest televised image. In short, vital questions of policy do not lend themselves to ad hoc, short-term approaches. (18:45) We need changes in legislation, Presidential understanding, and the behavior of National Security Advisers if we are to have the policymaking process we need in today's turbulent times.

In a February 1993 media survey, President Clinton's National Security Adviser, Anthony Lake, had been mentioned in the press about as often as Socks, the "First Cat!" Five months later Lake had pulled ahead by a margin of 2 to 1 (Socks--543, Lake--1,109). In contrast, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was mentioned over 15,000 times. (23:21). This amusing anecdote underlies an encouraging trend that has continued since the Bush Administration. National Security Advisers should be--appropriately-- active "behind the-scenes, but not heard."

So What?

We must recognize that in contrast to the sweeping changes that have taken place in the international environment, the national security apparatus used to cope with real-world complexities has--itself--changed very little. Yet, the President's National Security Adviser has risen to independent prominence, growing in power and stature never envisioned by the original framers of the NSC. Other advisers have also begun to play more dominant roles in foreign policy as international economic and non governmental organizations become more important than the traditional military and diplomatic instruments of power. However, change does not negate the need for an organization to institutionalize and give permanence to a pattern of relationships that are critical to achieving our national interests. Therefore, if the national security policymaking system needs a midcourse correction, let's make it. America can't afford to cross into the twenty-first century with a national security system designed for a bygone era.

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